

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims replaces all previous listing of claims:

Claims 1-49 (Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) A cardiac tissue ablation apparatus comprising:

first and second jaw assemblies, the jaw assemblies being relatively moveable between open and closed positions, respectively, to receive and compress cardiac tissue therebetween; each jaw assembly having ~~a clamping surface with a width and an~~ elongated electrically conductive member for ablating tissue between the jaw assemblies, the conductive members of the jaw assemblies being in face-to-face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source so as to be of opposite polarity when so connected for providing an electrical current through a selected tissue ablation area that is located between the jaw assemblies, ~~the conductive members each having a tissue contacting portion, which portion has a width that is less than the width of the clamping surface of its associated jaw assembly to contact at least a portion of the selected ablation area; and~~

each jaw assembly including at least one internal jaw support member and including an insulative cover that surrounds the internal jaw support member, wherein the internal jaw support member is insulated relative to the conductive member of the respective jaw assembly.

Claims 51-53 (cancelled)

54. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw assembly has a clamping surface with a width and each conductive member has a tissue contacting portion with a width, and wherein each tissue contacting portion has a width that is less than or equal to about one-third the width of the associated clamping

surface.

55. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein the conductive members are between approximately 3 to 8 cm in length and said portion of the conductive members is between approximately 0.12 to 0.6 mm in width.

56. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each conductive member is generally centrally located relative to the associated jaw assembly clamping surface.

57. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 in which at least one of the conductive members defines an interior lumen.

58. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw assembly has a clamping surface and ~~in which~~ a portion of the clamping surface is disposed on each side of the conductive member.

Claims 59-66 (Cancelled)

67. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw assembly includes an opening disposed for receiving the respective conductive member therein.

68. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each respective insulative cover includes an opening disposed for receiving the respective conductive member therein.

69. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw assembly has a clamping surface and each insulative cover is located on each side of the respective elongated conductive member of the corresponding jaw assembly and forms the clamping surface.

70. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw

assembly includes two or more jaw support members.

71. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each elongated conductive member protrudes through an opening in the respective insulative cover.

72. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each jaw assembly has a clamping surface and each elongated conductive member is substantially flush with the respective clamping surface.

73. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each respective insulative cover includes a groove disposed for receiving the respective conductive member therein.

74. (New) The apparatus of claim 50 wherein each insulative cover insulates the corresponding internal jaw support member from the conductive member.

75. (New) The apparatus of claim 58 wherein the clamping surface is insulative.

76. (New) A cardiac tissue ablation apparatus comprising:
first and second jaw assemblies, the jaw assemblies being relatively moveable between open and closed positions, respectively, to receive and compress cardiac tissue therebetween; each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member for ablating tissue between the jaw assemblies, the conductive members of the jaw assemblies being in face-to-face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source so as to be of opposite polarity when so connected for providing an electrical current through a selected tissue ablation area that is located between the jaw assemblies; and

each jaw assembly including at least one internal jaw support member and including an insulative cover that sufficiently surrounds the internal jaw support member to prevent contact of such internal jaw support member with the selected ablation area.

77. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 wherein each jaw assembly includes an opening disposed for receiving the respective conductive member therein.

78. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 wherein each respective insulative cover includes an opening disposed for receiving the respective conductive member therein.

79. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 wherein each jaw assembly has a clamping surface and each insulative cover is located on each side of the respective elongated conductive member of the corresponding jaw assembly and forms the clamping surface.

80. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 wherein each elongated conductive member protrudes through an opening in the respective insulative cover.

81. (New) A cardiac tissue ablation apparatus comprising:
first and second jaw assemblies, the jaw assemblies being relatively moveable between open and closed positions, respectively, to receive and compress cardiac tissue therebetween; each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member for ablating tissue between the jaw assemblies, the conductive members of the jaw assemblies being in face-to-face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source so as to be of opposite polarity when so connected for providing an electrical current through a selected tissue ablation area that is located between the jaw assemblies; and

each jaw assembly including at least one internal jaw support member and including an insulative cover that completely surrounds the internal jaw support

member.